

Serial No. 10/644,332

Office Action Dated: June 1, 2005

Response/Amendment Dated: Sept. 1, 2005

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Cancelled)

2. (Currently amended) A metering machine ~~according to claim 1~~ comprising:

a frame receiving a hopper;

at least one duct opening out into the hopper in the vicinity of a bottom thereof and receiving firstly a portion of a transfer screw extending at the bottom of the hopper; and

at least one metering cylinder which slidably receives a suction and delivery piston and which is connected to the duct via a plug valve;

wherein the metering cylinder and the duct have axes forming an angle of approximately at least 90° between them, and wherein the duct and the transfer screw are substantially horizontal, and wherein the metering cylinder extends substantially vertically under the plug valve.

3. (Currently amended) A metering machine ~~according to claim 1,~~ comprising:

a frame receiving a hopper;

at least one duct opening out into the hopper in the vicinity of a bottom thereof and receiving firstly a portion of a transfer screw extending at the bottom of the hopper; and

at least one metering cylinder which slidably receives a suction and delivery piston and which is connected to the duct via a plug valve;

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wherein the metering cylinder and the duct have axes forming an angle of approximately at least 90° between them, and wherein the piston and the transfer screw are actuated by respective associated motors.

4. (Currently amended) The[[A]] metering machine according to claim 3, wherein the hopper includes a scraper mounted to pivot in the hopper and associated with an independent drive motor.

5. (Currently amended) The[[A]] metering machine according to claim 2, wherein the plug valve is mounted on the frame to be movable between an active position in which it is applied against the duct and the metering cylinder and an inactive position in which it is spaced apart from the duct and from the metering cylinder to give access to them.

6. (Currently amended) The[[A]] metering machine according to claim 5, including means for lifting the plug valve away from the duct and from the metering cylinder respectively in a substantially axial direction of the duct and in a substantially axial direction of the cylinder.

7. (Currently amended) The[[A]] metering machine according to claim 6, wherein the plug valve is mounted on the frame to pivot about an axis parallel to the axis of the metering cylinder between the inactive position and a disengaged position close to the active position and in which the plug valve is slightly spaced apart from the duct and from the metering cylinder.

8. (Currently amended) The[[A]] metering machine according to claim 7, wherein the plug valve is mounted on the frame to pivot about an axis that is substantially perpendicular to the axis of the duct and to the axis of the metering cylinder between a position in which it is applied against the duct and a position in which it is slightly spaced apart from the duct.

9. (Currently amended) The[[A]] metering machine according to claim 7, wherein the plug valve is mounted on the frame to pivot about an axis that is substantially parallel to the axis of the duct between a position in which it is

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applied against the metering cylinder and a position in which it is slightly spaced apart from the metering cylinder.

10. (New) The metering machine according to claim 2, wherein the piston and the transfer screw are actuated by respective associated motors.

11. (New) The metering machine according to claim 10, wherein the hopper includes a scraper mounted to pivot in the hopper and associated with an independent drive motor.